

grim but to all of us, I believe, unacceptable and particularly painful to families who must bear this terrible loss.

This legislation is simple, straightforward, and effective. I must commend Senator KOHL for his authorship and for his persistence in pursuing this legislation. It mandates that a child safety lock device or trigger lock be sold with every handgun. Most locks resemble a padlock that locks around the gun trigger and immobilizes the trigger, preventing it from being used. These and other locks can be purchased for every gun for less than \$10 and thus used by thousands of gun owners to protect their firearms from unauthorized use.

This approach is supported by a huge number of individuals. In fact, this Senate has gone on record previously overwhelmingly supporting this amendment. Polls have shown that 73 percent of the American public supports this amendment, including 6 out of 10 gun owners.

This legislation is not only well meaning and well intended, but it could be very effective if we adopt it. I am pleased to see we are now moving to consider this amendment. I am delighted that tomorrow morning we will get a chance for further debate and a vote on this amendment.

I yield my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Idaho is recognized.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, let me thank Senator REED for his cooperation and effort today as we work our way through this legislation. Several amendments that had have been brought to the floor with an attempt to offer them we are looking to see if we can work with our colleagues in acceptance of them. We have a broad base of support for the underlying legislation, and we want to be able to sustain that support as we go into final passage.

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I have now had the opportunity to review the Frist amendment, No. 1606. This amendment simply restates that the Attorney General of the United States can continue to enforce current Federal firearms laws against those who violate them, including dealers. In my view, nothing in S. 397 would prohibit the Attorney General from going forward in those matters. Nevertheless, at this time, I have no objection to restating that authority, as proposed in amendment No. 1606.

In my view, though, amendment No. 1606 does not address the circumstances that my amendment seeks to remedy. The Attorney General has always had the authority to enforce its gun laws yet some dealers continue to act irresponsibly. My concern is that the provisions of S. 397 would completely immunize from lawsuits those irresponsible gun dealers who have an established history of repeatedly losing guns or have an established history of firearms being stolen again and again from

their inventory. If enacted without my amendment, S. 397 could cause the relatively small number of irresponsible gun dealers to grow, not shrink.

My amendment is precisely aimed at these irresponsible and unscrupulous gun dealers who repeatedly lose firearms and have firearms stolen from their inventory. This is exactly what happened in the DC area sniper case. The snipers, both of whom were not allowed under the law to purchase a firearm, apparently stole their weapon from a gun store in Washington state that had previously lost or had stolen more than 200 weapons over a short period of time. When a gun dealer has an established history of lost or stolen guns and that lost or stolen gun is used in the commission of a serious crime that causes death or injury, it is a grave inequity to lock those victims out of the courthouse doors.

While I have no objection to amendment No. 1606, it clearly does not address the very real problem remedied by my amendment.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent there now be a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

PENSION REFORM

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, there has been a significant development in private pension law this week, and I have come to the floor to discuss it briefly because I think it is something that will be of enormous interest to working families across the country who, of course, have been reading for months now about their pension plans going belly up. These are workers who work hard, play by the rules, hope to have a dignified retirement and have understood that Social Security was never going to cover all of their retirement security needs. So they have sought to have a private pension, and companies across this country have given them the impression—falsely, in a number of instances—that their private pension would be secure and there for them when they retire.

One of the aspects of this whole challenge, with respect to pension security, has been to eliminate what I believe is a double standard today in private pension laws. There is in fact a double standard in private pension law because so often the executive retirement benefits get hidden in a lockbox while the worker ends up getting creamed in the process.

What we have done, on a bipartisan basis in the Senate Finance Committee, is to say that that double

standard, the standard that protects the executives while it clobbers the workers, will no longer be tolerated under our private pension statutes.

As a result of a change that a number of our colleagues worked on, which was backed by Chairman GRASSLEY and Senator BAUCUS, if this provision that we have developed becomes law, if a company pension plan is funded at less than 80 percent, then the executive pensions cannot be hidden under the ruse of being “deferred compensation.” That is what we have seen come to light in the last few months, that somehow the executives walk away with millions of dollars worth of pension benefits under the guise of it somehow being something called deferred compensation while the workers end up seeing their pensions disappear by 40, 50, 60 percent.

This provision, in my view, is extremely important because it will prevent companies whose pension plans are at risk of going under from protecting the executive pension while allowing the employees’ pensions to sink like a stone.

An example of this would be a flight attendant from Tigard, OR, who gave United Airlines 16 years of service, saw her pension fall recently to a net of \$138 a month, while the CEO of United is going to continue to receive \$4.5 million. Now, of course, the CEO claims it is not really a pension, that this was compensation worked out before the executive came to United. But I can tell you that elderly woman in Tigard, OR, would sure like to have what the United executive has, regardless of what it is technically referred to under pension law.

A lot more needs to be done to ensure that the executives are not going to reap these huge gains at the expense of their workers. Captain Duane Woerth of the Airline Pilots Association said it well, in my view, when he said, “While thousands of pilots will retire with only a fraction of the pension benefits they earned and expected, airline executives can look forward to retirements knowing that their nest eggs are solid gold.” This was reported in *Fortune* magazine. And there are numerous other examples where generous executive pensions have been protected at the expense of the workers’ retirement.

In March of 2002, for example, US Air CEO Stephen Wolf took a lump-sum pension payout of \$15 million, including benefits, for 24 years of service that he never actually performed. Six months later, the company filed for bankruptcy and terminated its pilot pension plan, leaving the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation with \$2.2 billion in liabilities. Where is the fairness in all of that? The executive takes this huge golden parachute away while the workers try to figure out how to make ends meet when the company files for bankruptcy and terminates the pension plan.

Three months before United filed for bankruptcy in 2002, the company

placed \$4.5 million in a special bankruptcy protected trust for their CEO, Mr. Glenn Tilton. United then terminated all of its pension plans in 2005, leaving the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation with \$6.6 billion in liability.

In 2002, the Motorola Company chose to not make any contributions to its pension plan for 70,000 employees and retirees, a plan that was underfunded by \$1.4 billion. At the same time, Motorola found another \$38 million to give its top executives a variety of pension perks.

In 1999, IBM's cash balance conversion resulted in dramatic pension cuts for the older workers. It is still being litigated in the courts, but in 2002, IBM CEO Lou Gerstner, who oversaw the cash conversion, retired with a pension of \$1.1 million per year.

In November of 2002, Delta began phasing out its traditional defined benefit plan for 56,000 employees and replaced it with a cash balance pension plan. As Delta was shorting its workers, their former CEO got a generous guaranteed pension plan of \$1 million per year that will be available to him when he turns 65.

These are a few examples, Mr. President, of excessive executive generosity, and they have been particularly egregious in the airline sector, where there have been numerous threats of bankruptcy and actual problems with respect to keeping the workers' pensions intact or even a portion of them secure.

I am pleased the Finance Committee took a significant first step yesterday toward cutting off this corporate spigot that has been gushing millions of dollars for executive pensions but produces less than a trickle of funds for tens of thousands of hard-working Americans. There is more to do.

Certainly the first step that began yesterday in the Senate Finance Committee at ending this double standard came about because Chairman GRASSLEY and Senator BAUCUS worked in a bipartisan fashion, and Senator BINGAMAN, Senator KERRY, Senator SCHUMER, and others joined me in pressing for this change. But suffice it to say there is more to do in this area. Certainly the question of what companies are required to do in terms of making their premium payments is important. In the days ahead the Finance Committee and eventually the Senate as a body will have to take up these issues.

What I wanted to bring to the Senate's attention today is that this is an important start. It is a start that keeps faith with American workers who have come to my townhall meetings. The Presiding Officer is from Georgia and represents a number of workers affected by the financial problems of Delta Airlines. People come to our town meetings and ask, how is it that the executives get off scot-free with respect to these pension issues while we are getting clobbered? I am tired of reading about how the executives have

somehow been able, under the guise of deferred compensation or special retirement benefits that are protected from bankruptcy proceedings, and I am tired of seeing how the executives always come out hunky-dory while the workers end up trying to figure how to make ends meet when their pensions have been slashed by 40, 50, or 60 percent.

There is more to do in terms of reforming private pension law, but this effort to eliminate the double standard where executives get protected and workers get hurt, eliminating that double standard is at the center of what good bipartisan pension reform ought to be all about. Fortunately, the Senate Committee on Finance took a big step in the right direction by saying yesterday that if a company's pension plan is not actually funded, then the executives cannot find their way to yet another lockbox and protect themselves with these deferred compensation arrangements.

I yield the floor.

TRIBUTE TO JERMAIN TAYLOR

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I thank my colleagues for allowing me to take a few moments for an important recognition for Arkansans. Today I rise to pay tribute to two very distinguished Arkansans, first to the new and undefeated, undisputed middleweight champion of the world, Jermain Taylor.

Jermain Taylors' skill in the boxing ring is only one reason for me to recognize him on the Senate floor. Jermain is one of boxing's rising young stars.

He is known for his skill and his power in the ring, but he is also known for his grace and humility outside of the ring.

On July 16, Jermain, a Little Rock native, thrilled the people of Arkansas when he stepped into a ring in Las Vegas, NV and took the middleweight championship of the world from Bernard Hopkins.

Jermain's victory that night was the culmination of a lifetime of hard work and sacrifice that began when he was just a small boy. When Jermain was 5, he had to take on the responsibility of being the man of the house after his father left the family.

Even at that young age, he took responsibility for his younger sisters without hesitation.

At the age of 13, he made his way into Ozell Nelson's gym and, though he lost his first sparring session, he enjoyed the challenge and believed he would improve, and he could improve with hard work.

He did, and in 1996 he won the U.S. Under 19 Championships. In 2000, he won a bronze medal while representing his country in the Olympic Games held in Sydney, Australia. Shortly thereafter he began his pro career.

By all accounts and by every measure, Jermain Taylor is a great fighter, but he is an even better person. He has

been described as humble, determined and one who knows that family comes first.

In short, he embodies the best of what being an Arkansan is all about.

He is a self described country boy with country values. Being an old farmer's daughter myself, I can vouch for the fact that there is nothing wrong with that.

Thousands of Arkansans traveled to Las Vegas to support their local hero. Chants of J.T. and the calling of the hogs could be heard throughout the fight as Jermain outworked and outboxed his opponent.

TRIBUTE TO JACKSON T. "JACK" STEPHENS

Mrs. LINCOLN. Mr. President, I also now go to a sadder note and rise to pay tribute to a fallen pillar of the Arkansas business and philanthropy community, Mr. Jack Stephens. Jack passed away quietly at his home on Saturday, July 23, after a period of illness. He has been remarked to have been one of the most incredible businessmen in his lifetime. We have truly lost a visionary businessman who invested in hundreds of Arkansas companies, many of which became leaders in their industry.

He also became one of my home State's most active philanthropists, never forgetting his humble roots and the value of rural life. Jackson T. Stephens was born during the Roaring Twenties and was raised during the Great Depression on a farm in south central Arkansas. He picked cotton and worked a mule on the farm before taking jobs in nearby Hope, AR, during his teens.

The Depression helped to shape a generation of Americans who valued every penny and deeply respected the opportunities that freedom brings, the opportunity to earn a living and to give back. Those lessons were not lost on Jack Stephens. His parents A. J. and Ethel taught him the values of self-reliance, diligence, integrity, and hard work. His father once told Jack, "Success is not a destiny to be reached but the quality of the journey we make."

After attending public schools in Prattsville, AR, and graduating high school from Columbia Military Academy in Columbia, TN, Jack Stephens became a 1947 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy. For the rest of his life, he remained close to many of his Naval Academy buddies, particularly ADM William Crowe, Ambassador Vernon Weaver, and President Jimmy Carter. He never forgot the important value of that education at a service academy and, more importantly, his service to this great Nation.

After finishing up at the Naval Academy, Jack joined his brother Witt Stephens at his financial company, Stephens, Inc. The two of them built one of the country's most premier investment banking firms, the largest off Wall Street.